Amendments to the Specification:

Page 14, please replace the paragraph spanning lines 2-21 as follows:

The apparatus which is shown in Fig. 1 comprises a storage facility 10 here shown as a magazine which contains a supply (stack) 13 of superimposed blanks 11 each of which can constitute a coupon carrying an advertisement, promotional material or the like. The purpose of the apparatus is to transfer successive blanks 11 from the outlet at the lower end of the magazine 10 into the range of a collar 19 which is to form part of a finished hinged lid pack containing an array of smokers' products. It is customary to bring successive blanks 11 into contact with the inner envelopes of packs ~~P~~ each of which contains an array of smokers' products (e.g., an array of plain or filter cigarettes, cigars or cigarillos in a so-called quincunx formation). The inner envelope can consist of metallic foil which directly surrounds and confines the array. The manner in which a blank can be positioned in a finished hinged lid cigarette pack having inner and outer envelopes is shown, for example, in Figure 1 of the aforementioned US patent No. 5,657,609 to Spada et al.

Please add the following paragraph after the paragraph spanning Page 17, line 25 through Page 18, line 7.

Fig. 1 schematically shows a series of packs 41 that are conveyed to pocket 18 preferably after a blank 11 is introduced beneath collar 19 at the station AS. The packs 41 are introduced into the pocket 18 as described below.

Pages 20-21, please replace the paragraphs spanning page 20, line 7 through page 21, line 15 as follows:

When the improved apparatus is put to use in a cigarette packing machine or in an analogous machine, a collar 19 which is to form part of the ultimate product (hinged lid pack) is moved (see the arrow 219 in Fig. 1) to a predetermined position relative to the rotary blank folding turntable (packing conveyor or folding device) 17. The latter is thereupon indexed through a predetermined angle (normally 90°) before a blank 11 is introduced beneath the collar 19 prior to delivery of a cigarette pack ~~P~~ 41 (and more specifically of that portion of a cigarette pack which includes a block-shaped array of cigarettes and an inner envelope, e.g., an envelope made of tinfoil or the like) into the respective pocket of the turntable. In other words, the introduction of a cigarette pack into a pocket of the turntable follows the conveying of a blank 11 to the required position relative to the collar 19.

For example, the collar 19 can be introduced by a suitable conveyor system ~~119~~ 219 at the 6 o'clock position of the turntable 17 and is held ready in such position while a blank 11 is being advanced (pushed) below the collar. The pocket 18 of the turntable 17 is preferably provided with narrow lateral supporting strips or the like as well as (if necessary) with appropriate lower and/or overhead guides. The collar 19, the blank 11 and the pack ~~P~~ 41 are brought together in the 3 o'clock position of the respective pocket. The blank 11 is pushed or pulled out of the pocket, and a pusher is preferably employed to move the pack upwardly. In addition, one can employ the moving device 27 of Fig. 6 which is delivered from above to engage and to move the pack 41. Such moving device can further serve to simultaneously expel (push) the blank 11 from its guide 21; the thus

expelled blank comes to rest upon a pack ~~P~~ 41.

Page 21 -24, please replace the paragraphs spanning Page 21, line 20 through page 24 line 12 as follows:

An important advantage of the improved method and apparatus is that the blanks 11 are delivered beneath the collars 19 prior to coming in contact with a pack ~~P~~ 41, i.e., with a commodity which can include an array of smokers' products and an inner envelope. This has been found to permit for a pronounced reduction of the overall number of parts in the apparatus as well as for a considerable simplification of the method. Thus, it is not necessary to provide additional gripping, holding and/or transporting means which lift a collar 19 at the assembling station AS preparatory to arrival of a blank 11 at such station. As can be seen in Figs. 1, 2 and 4, the blank 11 at the station AS is located above a pocket 18 of the packing conveyor (folding device) 17. At such time, the blank 11 can be disposed beneath another constituent of the ultimate product. However, it is presently preferred to initially assemble a blank 11 with a collar 19 and to thereupon supply a pack ~~P~~ 41 to a position in which the blank is located (at least in part) between the collar 19 and the pack. The moving device 27 is preferably designed to push (see the arrow 28 in Fig. 6) the blank 11 out of the guide 21 during or prior to delivery of a pack ~~P~~ 41 to the required position relative to the collar 19; at any rate, separation of the blank 11 from the guide 21 is completed before the blank, the associated collar 19 and the associated pack ~~P~~ 41 are advanced to the next processing station where such parts are confined in an outer envelope. The utilization of the moving device 27 contributes to simplicity of the improved apparatus.

The invention can be practiced with equal or similar advantage in connection with the conveying of blanks from a source other than a magazine and in connection with proper positioning of blanks relative to components other than collars of the type employed in hinged lid packs of cigarettes or the like. All that counts is to ensure that, when the blanks and the components are to be associated with each other at a station analogous to the assembling station AS, the blanks are prevented from descending into an opening corresponding to the pocket 18 of the packing conveyor (folding device) 17. The assembling of discrete blanks with discrete components (such as 19) prior to actual contact of the thus assembled parts with discrete packs ~~P~~ 41 renders it possible to simplify the assembling, to achieve the assembling with a high degree of reproducibility of the assembly of blanks, components and packs into ultimate products such as hinged lid cigarette packs.

The moving device 27 constitutes an optional but highly desirable feature of the improved apparatus. This device ensures predictable removal of successive blanks 11 from the assembling station AS. In accordance with a presently preferred embodiment, the movements of the device 27 are associated with movements of a pusher which serves to introduce a pack ~~P~~ 41 into the pocket 18. Alternatively, the device 27 can be designed in such a way that it engages a pack ~~P~~ 41 while also segregating a blank 11 from the guide 21.

In accordance with a presently preferred embodiment, the moving device 27 or its equivalent is installed for movement in a direction to move successive blanks 11 from the guide 21 and toward successive packs ~~P~~ 41. If the guide 21 is spaced apart from the collar 19 at the assembling station AS, such guide can constitute a stationary part which

is or which can be mounted in such a way that the collar 19 at the station AS is movable upwardly and/or downwardly, especially vertically.